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SUBJECT: SECURITY COUNCIL CONSULTATIONS ON UNMIN/NEPAL

¶1. (SBU) Summary: Karin Lundgren, Representative of the Secretary-General to Nepal and head of UNMIN, briefed the Council July 20 on latest developments. As noted in the Secretary-General's recent report on Nepal/UNMIN, Lundgren reiterated disappointment with the slow pace of the peace process following the May crisis, but also said Nepal's leaders had taken encouraging steps in recent weeks. She emphasized the importance of UNMIN, and strongly supported a potential Security Council visit to Nepal in the fall. Council members all supported a six-month extension of UNMIN's mandate (adoption of the Resolution is scheduled for July 22), but emphasized that UNMIN's presence was always seen as temporary and short-term. End summary.

¶2. (SBU) Lundgren said Nepalese political parties remain "seriously polarized" and noted Prachanda's leaked video to Maoist cadres as a particularly difficult challenge. Trust among the parties is at a low ebb, said Lundgren, and other risk factors to the peace process - such as the situation in the Terai - continue to have a negative impact. She cited two potential areas for progress: the first is discussion of a high-level consultative mechanism, and the second is discussion regarding a national unity government. Although both ideas are still in the discussion phase, all political leaders recognize the untenable nature of the current political situation, said Lundgren. She noted some halting progress in the discharge of disqualified combatants, including the reconstitution of the Special Committee. Turning to UNMIN, Lundgren said all principal interlocutors consider UNMIN's role in Nepal to be quite important. Furthermore, Nepalese political leaders are aware of the Security Council's impatience, and have agreed in principle to set benchmarks and timelines for the fulfillment of the tasks in UNMIN's mandate. They also noted that "any abrupt political disengagement by the UN would be unhelpful," said Lundgren. In final remarks at the conclusion of the meeting, Lundgren said UNMIN had dramatically decreased its budget, from 55 million in 2008 to under 25 million in 2009. She also strongly supported a potential Security Council visit to Nepal, saying it would be an "extremely positive step."

¶3. (SBU) Council members all supported a six-month extension of UNMIN's mandate, as requested by the Government of Nepal in its recent letter to the Council. The UK, lead country for Nepal issues in the Council, noted that the draft resolution extending UNMIN was still being discussed, although adoption appeared to be on track for July 22. Like the majority of other Council members, the UK welcomed the ideas for the high-level consultative mechanism and a national unity government, and urged the government to implement them as soon as possible. While welcoming potential new developments, Council members - including China, Costa Rica, Libya, France, the U.S. and the UK - noted that overall the peace process has not recovered from the May crisis that resulted in the Maoists leaving the government. Ambassador DiCarlo outlined the U.S. position, called on swift progress to implement the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, urged that work resume in the Special and

Technical Committees, and underscored U.S. support for the people of Nepal. Costa Rica, Austria, Burkina Faso and Mexico all strongly supported the mandate of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and called on its mandate to be extended. Russia echoed similar themes, but emphasized that UNMIN,s mandate is winding down and should under no circumstances be "expanded".

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